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[without reference to a Main Committee (A/51/L.18/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1)]

51/197. The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

The General Assembly,

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and its own resolutions, particularly resolutions 49/137 of 19 December 1994 and 50/132 of 20 December 1995, in which it recognized the importance of international support for Central America, within an appropriate global frame of reference, in order to preserve and extend the progress made in the process of consolidating peace, democracy and sustainable development and thereby to overcome the obstacles that are preventing Central America from becoming a region of peace, freedom, democracy and sustainable development,

Recognizing the importance and validity of the commitments made by the Central American Presidents since the Esquipulas II summit meeting of 7 August 1987,[1] and their subsequent summit meetings,

Reaffirming that there can be no peace in Central America without sustainable development or democracy, which are essential for ensuring the process of change in the region, and recognizing the importance of settling differences by means of dialogue, negotiation and respect for the legitimate

[1] A/42/521-S/19085, annex; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-second Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1987, document S/19085.

interests of all States, with full respect for the principles of self-determination and non-intervention,

Drawing attention to the establishment at the Summit Meeting of Central American Presidents held at Guácimo, Costa Rica, from 18 to 20 August 1994, and adopted at the Central American Environment Summit for Sustainable Development, held at Managua on 12 and 13 October 1994, of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America,[2] which constitutes the new integrated strategy for development, and the importance of the International Conference on Peace and Development in Central America, held at Tegucigalpa on 24 and 25 October 1994,[3] that marked a major turning point in the course taken by the region, as well as the Treaty on Central American Social Integration, adopted at the El Salvador summit meeting on 30 March 1995,[4] one of whose main objectives is to strengthen the investment in human capital,

Welcoming the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, adopted at the summit meeting held at San Pedro Sula, Honduras, from 13 to 15 December 1995,[5] that reaffirms, inter alia, the strengthening of civil society, the security of individuals and the elimination of poverty, and recognizing the importance for Central America of the Regional Programme of Action for the Development of Tourism, adopted at the summit meeting held at Montelimar, Nicaragua, on 8 and 9 May 1996,[6]

Emphasizing the importance of cooperation and international solidarity in supporting the efforts being made by the peoples and Governments of Central America for the consolidation of a firm and lasting peace, and the need to strengthen the new programme of cooperation and economic, technical and financial assistance for Central America in the light of the new situation in the region,

Welcoming the role played by the peacekeeping operations and observer and monitoring missions of the United Nations, which carried out successfully their mandate in Central America pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, respectively,

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[2] See A/49/580-S/1994/1217, annex I; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-ninth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1994, document S/1994/1217.

[3] See A/49/639-S/1994/1247; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-ninth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1994, document S/1994/1247.

[4] A/49/901-S/1995/396, annex VII; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-ninth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1995, document S/1995/396.

[5] A/51/67, annex II.

[6] A/50/998-S/1996/497, appendix; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth year, Supplement for April, May and June 1996, document S/1996/497.

Recalling its resolutions 48/267 of 19 September 1994, 49/236 A of 31 March 1995, 49/236 B of 14 September 1995 and 50/220 of 3 April 1996, by which it decided to establish the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala and extended the mandate of the Mission,

Recognizing the commitment of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca to continue the negotiations in the framework of the Guatemalan peace process, as well as to support the presence of United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala,

Welcoming the signing of the Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and Agrarian Situation at Mexico City on 6 May 1996,[7] and the joint statement of the Peace Commission of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, issued on 6 August 1996,[8]

Also welcoming the signing of the Agreement on the Strengthening of Civilian Power and on the Role of the Armed Forces in a Democratic Society at Mexico City on 19 September 1996,[9] and the statements of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca of 7 November 1996, which are a positive contribution to the peace process in Guatemala,

Further welcoming resolution 50/226 of 10 May 1996, by which the General Assembly established the United Nations Office of Verification in El Salvador as a mechanism that would combine regular visits by a high-level envoy from Headquarters with a small group of experts in the field,

Stressing the efforts being made by the people and Government of El Salvador to consolidate the progress made towards a society characterized by democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, and to honour its commitments under the Peace Agreement, for the benefit of all Salvadorans,

Recognizing the approval by the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador on 31 July 1996 of a package of constitutional reforms recommended by the Commission on the Truth, as well as the adoption of the Police Career Law,

Recognizing that the efforts of the Government of Nicaragua to consolidate peace and democracy, repair its economy and rebuild the nation merit the urgent support of the international community and the United Nations system in order to preserve the gains made and overcome the effects of the war and natural disasters which persist in Nicaragua,

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[7] A/50/956, annex.

[8] A/50/1023, annex.

[9] A/51/410-S/1996/853, annex; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1996, document S/1996/853.

Welcoming the adoption of resolutions 49/16 of 17 November 1994 and 51/8 of 25 October 1996, in which it recognized the exceptional circumstances that still prevail in Nicaragua,

Recognizing the importance of the effective support of the United Nations and governmental and non-governmental mechanisms in taking steps to launch new initiatives in the framework of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, and of the results of the inter-agency workshop held at Montelimar on 19 March 1996, which aimed to establish a strategic alliance between all agencies of the United Nations system working in the region,

Stressing the importance of promoting national debates on the character of macroeconomic policies most conducive to sustainable human development goals and to a lasting peace in Central America, as well as the ongoing policy dialogue carried out in this regard by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,[10]

1. Commends the efforts of the peoples and Governments of the Central American countries to consolidate peace and promote sustainable development by implementing the agreements adopted at the summit meetings, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to give the fullest possible support to the initiatives and activities of the Governments of the Central American countries;

2. Supports the decision of the Presidents of the Central American countries to declare Central America a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development, and encourages the initiatives of the Central American countries, in the framework of the integrated strategy for sustainable development and in the context of the summit meetings, to consolidate Governments that base their development on democracy, peace, cooperation and respect for human rights;

3. Draws attention to the decision of the Presidents of the Central American countries embodied in the Declaration of Guácimo,[11] in which the national and regional strategy known as the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America[2] became an integrated initiative reflected in a programme of immediate action in the political, moral, economic, social and environmental fields, through which the Central American countries hope to become, with the support of the international community, an example of sustainable development for other regions;

4. Emphasizes the work accomplished by the Central American Integration System in favour of subregional integration to promote economic growth oriented towards human development and in the strengthening of democracy and the consolidation of peace in the region, and calls upon Member

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[10] A/51/338.

[11] A/49/340-S/1994/994, annex; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-ninth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1994, document S/1994/994.

States and international organizations to provide effective cooperation for the strengthening of subregional integration;

5. Supports the adoption of the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America[5] concerning the supremacy and strengthening of the power of civil society, a reasonable balance of forces, the security of individuals and of their property, the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of sustainable development, the protection of the environment, the eradication of violence, corruption, impunity, terrorism and trafficking in drugs and arms, and the increased channelling of resources into social investments;

6. Welcomes the agreement reached on 11 November 1996 by the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca to conclude their negotiations, with a view to finalizing and signing a firm and lasting peace agreement in Guatemala on 29 December 1996, thus completing the peace process in Central America, and, in this context, encourages both parties to undertake all necessary measures to achieve this objective;

7. Also welcomes the adoption of the Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and Agrarian Situation,[7] the joint statement of the Peace Commission of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca[8] and the Agreement on the Strengthening of Civilian Power and on the Role of the Armed Forces in a Democratic Society,[9] as well as the statements of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca of 7 November 1996, which are a positive contribution to the peace process in Guatemala;

8. Recognizes the commitment of the Government and civil society of Guatemala to advance in the fight against impunity and towards the consolidation of the rule of law;

9. Calls upon the parties to comply fully with their commitments under all the agreements reached between them and to implement the corresponding recommendations of the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala;

10. Requests the Secretary-General, the organizations of the United Nations system and the international community to continue their support for the peace process and hence for efforts to promote national reconciliation, democracy and development in Guatemala, and reiterates its appreciation of the peace efforts of the Secretary-General, the Group of Friends (Colombia, Mexico, Norway, Spain, the United States of America and Venezuela), as well as its appreciation of the contribution of the Assembly of Civil Society and other Guatemalans within the constitutional framework and the peace agreements;

11. Calls upon the Government of El Salvador and all the political forces involved in the peace process to make all possible efforts to complete the implementation of all remaining aspects of the Peace Agreement;

12. Welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Office of Verification in El Salvador as a mechanism that combined regular visits by a high-level envoy from Headquarters with a small group of experts in the field that efficiently verified the progress of the implementation of all remaining aspects of the Peace Agreement in El Salvador;

13. Reiterates its recognition of the effective participation of the Secretary-General and his representatives and encourages them to continue to take all necessary steps to ensure the successful implementation of all the commitments made by the parties to the Peace Agreement in El Salvador;

14. Recognizes the achievements made by the people and Government of Nicaragua in their efforts to consolidate peace, democracy and reconciliation among Nicaraguans, as well as the importance of political, economic and social consultation among all sectors of the country, so as to continue with the country's reconstruction, the renegotiation and reduction of the external debt, as well as the economic recovery and social development of the country;

15. Welcomes with satisfaction the peaceful electoral process held in Nicaragua on 20 October 1996, and its importance as a further step towards the strengthening of democracy, peace, development and reconstruction in that country;

16. Supports the treatment accorded to Nicaragua in the light of its continuing exceptional circumstances, so that the international community and financial institutions can incorporate that treatment into programmes to support the country's economic recovery and social reconstruction;

17. Expresses its appreciation of the work of the support group for Nicaragua (Canada, Mexico, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden), which, under the coordination of the Secretary-General, is playing an active role in supporting the country's efforts towards economic recovery and social development, particularly with regard to solving the external debt problem and securing investments and new resources that will allow the country's economic and social programmes to continue towards national reconciliation, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to support those efforts;

18. Emphasizes the importance of the current political dialogue and economic cooperation between the European Union and its member States and the Central American countries, with the participation of the Group of Three (Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela), in particular the ministerial conference held at Florence, Italy, on 21 and 22 March 1996, where new objectives were approved, concerning support for the strengthening and consolidation of the rule of law, support for social policies aimed at softening the social costs of structural adjustment programmes, and support for the Central American integration process;

19. Also emphasizes the commitments on sustainable development adopted at the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth meetings of the Summit of Central American Presidents, with the aim of fashioning a region of peace, democracy and sustainable development, and urges the international community to give them every support;

20. Reiterates the importance of the support of the United Nations system through its operational activities, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, aimed at facilitating the development of programmes and projects which are indispensable for strengthening peace and the development process in the region, bearing particularly in mind the new strategy for subregional development established by the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America, and urges the international community to lend its support to the achievement of the goals of the new strategy for development in Central America;

21. Reiterates its full appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts to promote the pacification process and the consolidation of peace in Central America and to the groups of friendly countries which have made a direct contribution to attaining those ends, and requests that those efforts be maintained;

22. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution;

23. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development".

87th plenary meeting
17 December 1996